

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election without presenting an equally positive portrayal of Senator Kerry prior to the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. Dissenting voices, not only from the democratic party, but from other political and social groups should be required broadcasting on any TV station using the public airwaves. In order to maintain a democracy the voices of people who are not in power must be presented in a critical fashion.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.